

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

In the Office Action, claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 05-23462U (“JP ‘462”).¹ In addition claims 4-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have amended claims 1, 4, and 5 to better describe and delineate the invention. Accordingly, claims 1-7 are pending for further consideration.

All Claims Are Allowable Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 4-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Claims 4 and 5 have been amended to correct the informalities and inconsistencies, identified by the Examiner. However, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4 and 5 as originally submitted were in compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. As such, the newly amended dependent claim 4 and independent claim 5 meet all requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

¹ The Office Action states that claims 1-2 stand rejected. However, during a telephone conference with Examiner S. Nguyen on July 18, 2001, the Examiner indicated that claims 1-7 should be considered as rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and Applicants reply accordingly.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *JP '462*. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Independent claims 1 and 5 have been amended to better clarify the invention. The “packing protecting portion” elements of claims 1 and 5 are described as “provided by extending an end of an opening of a peripheral wall **in a continual longitudinal direction.**” At least this feature of claims 1 and 5 is not taught or suggested by *JP '462*.

Applicants respectfully submit that the dustproof cover of *JP '462* is much wider than is necessary to enclose the connector. The cover (29) in *JP '462* is much wider than is necessary because a portion of what the Office Action considers to be the “packing” (17) is orthogonally oriented with respect to the connector (7). Consequently, the cover (29) in *JP '462* extends out 90° from its longitudinal axis to engage the packing (17). The orientation of packing (17) and dustproof cover (29) of *JP '462* teaches away from the present invention, which, among other objectives, seeks to keep the dustproof cover size compact.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn because *JP '462* does not teaches or suggest each and every feature of present invention. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully assert that dependent claims 2-4 and 6-7 are allowable at least because of their dependence on independent claims 1 and 5 and for the separate features that they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current Amendment. The attached page is captioned "VERSIONS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. An early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. Should there be any questions regarding the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

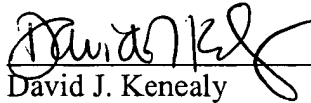
If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested, and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP

Date: October 18, 2001

By:


David J. Kenealy
Reg. No. 40,411

CUSTOMER NO.: 009629
MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP
1800 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-467-7000

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. A dustproof cover [**for a connector**] comprising:
a cap-shape cover; and
a packing protecting portion provided by extending an end of an opening of a peripheral wall of said cover **in a continual longitudinal direction**;
wherein said cover is fitted to a connector so as to cover a front-end fitting surface of said connector from a front side of said connector and [**wherein**] said packing protecting portion covers a packing exposed around an outer peripheral portion of said connector.

4. A **dustproof cover according to claim 1, further comprising:**
a prefitting dustproofing structure for a connector whereby said connector is provided with dustproof protection before said connector is fitted to a mating connector,
wherein [**a dustproof cover according to claim 1**] **said prefitting dustproofing structure** is fitted to the outer periphery of said connector from [**its**] **a** front side of said connector, and said packing is protected by said packing protecting portion of said dustproof cover.

5. A prefitting dustproofing structure [**for a connector**] comprising:
a connector provided with a packing exposed around an outer peripheral portion of a rear end of said connector; and
a dustproof cover having a packing protecting portion provided by extending an end of an opening of a peripheral wall **in a continual longitudinal direction, [thereof;]**
wherein said dustproof cover is fitted to the outer periphery of said connector so as to cover a front-end fitting surface of [**a**] **said** connector from a front side of said [**connection**] **connector**, and said packing protecting portion covers said packing.

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